

Message Text

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ACTION OES-04

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TAGS: XV, TGEN, NO, PLOS

SUBJ: ANTARCTIC MEETING: US STATEMENT

FROM USDEL ANTARCTIC

1. THERE FOLLOWS TEXT OF US STATEMENT ON RESOURCES

DELIVERED JUNE 12:

BEGIN TEST

MR. CHIARMAN:

WE NOW TURN TO ITEM 17-- THE MINERAL RESOURCES
QUESTION. MY DELEGATION HAS NOTED THE CAUTION WITH
WHICH MANY DELGATIONS REPRESENTED HERE HAVE APPROACHED
THIS QUESTION DURING THE OPENING STATEMENTS. WHILE
THE POTENTIAL GRAVITY OF PROBLEMS THA MAY BE CREATED
BY MINERAL RESOURCES ACTIVITIES WARRANTS THIS CAUTION, MY
DELEGATION IS HOPEFUL THAT OUT CONSULTATIONS WILL
PRODUCE A FULL AND FRANK EXCHANGE OF VIEWS HERE TODAY.

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MR. CHAIRMAN, THERE ARE MANY WHO HAVE BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH ANTARCTIC AFFAIRS OVER THE YEARS WHO MIGHT WISH THAT THE MINERAL RESOURCES QUESTION WOULD GO AWAY AND LEAVE ANTARCTICA TO THE SCIENTISTS. THERE ARE ALSO THOSE WHO WOULD DEFER SERIOUS CONSULTATIONS UNTIL MANY OF THE TROBLING UNCERTAINTIES WE FACE ARE REMOVED. LET US NOT DECEIVE OURSELVES. GLOBAL EVENTS SINCE THE LAST MEETING IN WELLINGTON CANNOT BE IGNORED. DESPITE THE VERY REAL UNCERTAINTIES WE FACE ON THESE QUESTIONS AT THIS TIME, IT IS PRUDENT TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE AT AN EARLY TIME TO AVOID POSSIBLE FUTURE EVENTS THAT MAY NOT VE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF ALL THE GOVERNMENTS REPRESENTED HERE TODAY. AS THE DISTINGUISHED FOREIGN MINISTER OF NORWAY SUGGESTED, LEAPS ON TECHNOLOGY IN THE CONTEXT OF CHANGING WORLD RESOURCES MARKETS COULD OUTSTRIP OUT ABILITY TO CONTROL EVENTS WHICH MAY SHAPE OUR COMMON DESTINY.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LET ME BE FRANK. THE ANTARCTIC TREATY DOES NOT REFER TO THEEXPLORATION AND EXPLOITATION OF MINERAL RESOURCES. SUCH ACTIVITIES, IN OUR VIEW, ARE A PERMITTED PEACE FUL USE OF THE AREA. CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE TREATY WOULD, OF COURSE, APPLY. NONE- THELESS, IT CAN BE EXPECTED THAT, IN THE EBSENCE OF A SHARED UNDERSTANDING ON THE MINERAL RESOURCES QUESTION, GOVERNMENTS WILL RESPOND TO ANY MINERAL RESOURCE ACTIVITIES IN ANTARCTICA IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR UNDERLYING JURIDICAL POSITIONS.

THE VIEWS OF MY GOVERNMENT IN THIS CONNECTION ARE WELL KNOWN, WE, AS WELL AS SEVERAL OTHER STATES, DO NOT CONSIDER THAT ANY PART OF ANTARCTICA IS SUBJECT TO THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ANY STATE.

THE VIEWS OF SOME OTHER GOVERNMENTS REPRESENTED IN THIS ROOM ARE CLEARLY CONTRARY TO THE VIEWS OF MY GOVERNMENT. THE SITUATION IS FURTHER COMPLICATED BY OVERLAPPING AND CONFLICTING CLAIMS.

THESE CONTRARY VIEWS WOULD RESULT IN SERIOUS PROBLEMS SHOULD MINERAL RESOURCES BE FOUND IN COMMERCIALY ATTRACTIVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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QUANTITIES. IN THE ABSENCE OF A SHARED UNDERSTANDING, THOS COUNTRIES WHO DO NOT RECOGNIZE CLAIMS TO SOVEREIGNTY WOULD SURELY HAVE TO ASSERT THE RIGHT TO COMMENCE MINERAL RESOURCE ACTIVITIES AT THEIR WILL, SUBJECT ONLY TO AP- PLICABLE PROVISIONS OF THE ANTARCTIC TREATY. THOSE WHO HAVE MADE CLAIMS TO SOVEREIGNTY WOULD CONTEST THAT VIEW.

SUCH A RESULT WOULD NOT BE A HAPPY ONE FROM THE
STANDPOINT OF OUR MUTUAL CONCERNS. IN THE ABSENCE OF
"COMMON UNDERSTANDING WITHOUT PRECONCEIVED IDEAS"
CALLED FOR BY YOU, MR. CHAIRMAN, THE ENVIRONMENTAL
RISKS FROM MINERAL RESOURCES ACTIVITIES, WHICH ARE OF
GREATEST DIRECT CONCERN TO THOSE NEAREST ANTARCTICA,
COULD THREATEN OUR MUTUAL INTERESTS IN PRESERVING THE
ANTARCTIC ENVIRONMENT. THE PRECIOUS SCIENTIFIC LABORATORY
WHICH THE ANTARCTIC TREATY WAS INTENDED TO PRESERVE COULD
BE DESTROYED. LIVING ORGANISMS IN THE REGION
THAT ARE OF COMMERCIAL OR SCIENTIFIC INTEREST WOULD BE
PLACED IN JEOPARDY.

MR. CHAIRMAN, THE TWELVE GOVERNMENTS REPRESENTED
HERE TODAY WOULD BE PLACED IN AN AWKWARD POSITION, INDEED,
SHOULD THESE EVENTS COME TO PASS, OR EVENTHREATEN TO
COM TO PASS. OUR CONSULTATIONS OVER THE YEARS HAVE CON-
SISTENTLY INDICATED A COMMON PERCEPTION THAT ANTARCTICA
WILL BETTER BENEFIT ALL MANKINDTHROUGH THE CONTINUED
COOPERATION OF THE TWELVE. I SUGGEST THAT WE WOULD BE
HARD-PRESSED TO MAINTAIN THIS PATTERN OF COOPERATION IN
THE FACE OF DISSENSION OVER THE MINERAL RESOURCES OF
ANTARCTICA.

MR. CHAIRMAN, THIS BLEAK PICTURE GOES TO THE HEART
OF THE PRINCIPLES AND PRUPOSES FOR WHICH OUR GOVERNMENTS
CREATED THE ANTARCTIC TREATY--A TREATY THAT HAS SERVED
US WELL. THIS IS A PICTURE OF INTERNATIONAL DISCORD
WITH ANTARCTICA THE SCENE AND ANTARCTIC MINERAL RESOURCES
THE OBJECT. THE DISTINGUSIHED DELEGATE OF BELGIUM WAS
CORRECT WHEN HE SAID THAT THE RESOURCES QUESTION
COULD EITHER DESTROY THE TREATY OR PUT IN ON A STRONGER
FOOTING. THE OPENING STATEMENTS ON MONDAY MADE IT
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CLEAR THAT ALL OF OUR GOVERNMENTS PREFER TO STRENGTHEN THE
ANTARCTIC TREATY AND NOT DESTROY IT. HOWEVER, THIS
BROADLY SHARED SENTIMENT IS NOT ENOUGH TO AVOID THE
DISCORD I REFERRED TO EARLIER. MY DELEGATION IS PREPARED
TO CONSULT ON CONCRETE PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES
WHICH SHOULD GUIDE OUR FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF TIS ISSUE.
IN THIS CONNECTION, WE CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO OUR PRE-
LIMINARY VIEWS AS PRESENTED IN OUR OPENING STATEMENT.

WE WELCOME A FULL AND FRANK EXCHANGE OF VIEWS AND
WILL PARTICIPATE TO THE END THAT ALL OF US CAN LEAVE
THIS DELIGHTFUL CITY SATISFIED THAT WE HAVE DONE OUR
BEST TO PURSUE OUR COMMON INTEREST. A NUMBER OF DELEGATES
HAVE SAID HERE THAT TIME IS RUNNING OUT. WE DO NOT
BELEIVE THAT TIME HAS RUN OUT OR THAT WE CANNOT BEAT THE

CLOCK IF WE ALL APPROACH THIS QUESTION WITH APPROPRIATE
SERIOUSNESS OF PURPOSE, IN A CONSTRUCTIVE AND STATESMAN-
LIKE FRAME OF MIND. END TEXT.
BYRNE

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